

V. REMARKS

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the Amendment: a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; b) does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the Amendment amplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an Appeal be necessary. The Amendment is necessary and was not earlier presented because it is made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. The amendments to the subject claims do not incorporate any new subject matter into the claims. Thus, entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 3, 5 -7, and 9-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Muroi (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0052238) in view of Nakamura (U.S. Patent No. 6,468,162). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a data reading unit for reading character data from at least two inserted trading cards which are inserted by a player with each trading card storing a set of character data and a payout unit for paying out the reward trading card to the player, the reward trading card storing the determine set of character data.

Claim 7, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine comprising that includes three slots into which two or three trading cards can be inserted by a player with each trading card storing a set of character data and a payout device which pays out the reward trading card to the player with the reward trading card storing the determined set of character data.

Claim 11, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes three slots into which at least two trading cards can be inserted by a player with each of the

trading card storing a set of character data and a payout device for paying out a reward trading card to the player with the reward trading card storing the set of character data.

Applicant believes that the Examiner's view is the features upon which the applicant relies (i.e., "game which advances based on the character firstly possessed by the player" and "collect trading cards") are not recited in the claims.

Regarding the above Examiner's view, Claim 1, for instance, recites that the data reading unit reads character data from at least two inserted trading cards, which is firstly possessed by the player and inserted by a player, and the advancing unit advances a game based on the read character data, so the game advances based on the character firstly possessed by the player.

In addition, the combining unit combines at least two sets of character data, which is read by the reading unit and is the base of advancing of the game so as to determine new character data, when a first predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game; the determining unit determines the character data of the reward trading card based on the combined character data; and the payout unit pays out the reward trading card to the player, wherein the character data of the reward trading card is determined based on the combined character data. Therefore the player, who received the reward card, can collect the reward card which stores the new character data.

It is respectfully submitted that that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of the claims as discussed above. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are allowable over the applied art.

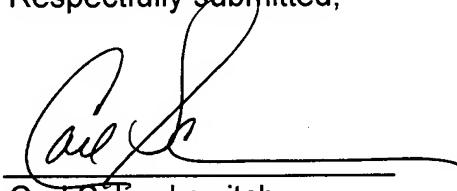
Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal

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